Orissa, linking National Highway No. 5 (Calcutta-Madras) and National Highway No. 6 (Calcutta-Bombay) needs urgent development; and

(d) if so, what amount has been sanctioned for that road?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b) Financial assistance is provided to the State Governments for taking up State roads of Inter-State or economic importance under the Scheme of Central Aid Programme of loan assistance for State roads of Inter-State of Economic Importance. Under the aforesaid scheme for the 7th Plan period, the construction of alternative road linking Bhubaneswar with Khuntani including bridge over river Mahanadi in Orissa which incidentally connects NH-42 with NH-5 has been approved.

(c) and (d) The Government of Orissa have proposed inclusion of this project for financing under the Asian Development Bank Assistance Programme.

Rail Accidents in Kerala

8. SHRI THOMAS KUTHIRAVATTOM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of railway accidents which took place during 1988-89 in Kerala ;

(b) what was the number of accidents reported during the previous year;

(c) what is the number of fatalities reported in these accidents and the amount disbursed as compensation;

(d) what were the main causes of these accidents;

(e) whether Government have appointed any experts for looking into the frequent accidents;

(f) what measures have been taken to improve the conditions and to avoid such accidents; and

(g) how old are the railway tracks in Kerala?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) to (g) Statistics of railway accidents and related information are maintained railway zone-wise and not State-wise.

Rail Accidents in the Trivandrum Division

9. SHRI N. E. BALARAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of railway accidents and derailments which took place from August, 1988 to January, 1989 in the Trivandrum division;

(b) whether Kerala Government has expressed its concern to the Ministry of Railways in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof, and the steps taken to improve the maintenance of tracks, deployment of required number of mechanical staff etc.;

(d) whether the report of inquiry into the rail accident in which the Island Express had plunged into a lake at Perumon near Quilon in August, 1988 has been received and examined by Government; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a)During the period August, 88 - January, 89, there were 5 train accidents on Trivandrum Division. All these were derailments.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The matters raised by the Kerala Government relate mainly to maintenance of track and rolling stock. In this connection, the following steps have already been taken:—

(i) 190 kms. of track have been strengthened, out of a total length of 220

kms. on the Ernakulam-Trivandrum section.

(ii) Through rail renewal on 3^0 and sharper curves has been completed. So far about 40 kms. of through rail renewal has also been completed.

(iii) Examination of rolling stock has been further intensified.

(iv) Administrative machinery to oversee the improvements being carried out has been strengthened.

(d) No, sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Railway Line from Bilara to Ber in Rajasthan

10. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to lay a rail line from Bilara to Ber in Rajasthan and to introduce a fast train between Jodhpur and Udaipur; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Metro Railway System between Madras Central and Luz Corner

11. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Metro Railway system which was planned and approved from Madras Central to Luz Corner has not been progressing due to the controversy created between the Ministry of Railways and the Tamil Nadu Government; and

(b) by when the said project would be completed and commissioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) This would depend upon the availability of funds in the coming years.

Complaints of Loss of Luggage and Goods in the Railways

12. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of complaints received from passengers about the loss of luggage and goods during the current financial year, zone-wise;

(b) what is the total amount paid by the Railways as claims for the loss of luggage and goods during the same period; and

(c) what are the corresponding figures of complaints received and the amount of claims paid by the Railways during the last two financial years, zone-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) to (c) A statement is attached. [*See* Appendix CXLIX, Annexure No. 2]. Figures for claims paid on passenger luggage and goods are not maintained separately.

International Conferences held in India

13. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 4316 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 1st September, 1988 and state:

(a) what is the number of International conferences held in New Delhi during the period between July and December, 1988 alongwith the number of participating countries and the number of delegates;